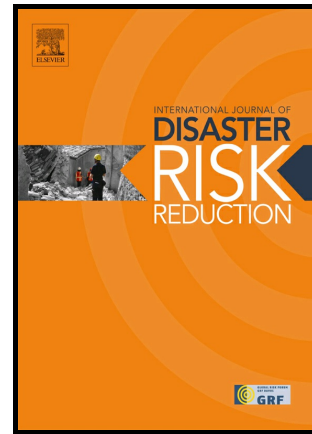


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Kit management in humanitarian supply chains

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Abstract

With the continuous growth in world population and increasing disruptions due to climate change around the world, global humanitarian organizations are hard pressed to improve their capacity to respond to emergencies. Such operations require the ability by humanitarian organizations to be dynamic and react to a wide range of situations on a short term basis and kits help them do so. The aim of this research is to understand how the capabilities of a large humanitarian organization help support kit management. The method used is a multiple case study on kitting activities that are managed by a large United Nations agency. Kits offer the possibility to combine both the knowledge and skills from technical specialists and local country office staff to offer a relevant solution for emergency response. Developing relevant kits for the humanitarian context require strong collaboration between partners in the preparedness phase and thorough follow up in monitoring and evaluation to develop standards and build up relevant knowledge. With proper kit management comes improvement in flexibility, timeliness and quality and these can be shared across supply chains when kits are transferred from one humanitarian organization to another.

Keywords:

Supply chain, humanitarian logistics, kits, kitting management

1. Introduction

Humanitarian organizations across the world face multiple complex challenges when responding to disasters. The World Bank identifies population growth with total population exposed to flood going from 570 million in 1970 to 1 billion in 2010, increased socioeconomic activity and land-use change as the drivers of evolving disaster risks (Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery 2016). Current disaster trends will increase the need for response capacity by global humanitarian organizations. These organizations usually respond through providing services and materials to the affected populations. One of the type of material often used by humanitarian organizations are kits. Kits play an important part of the response phase of disasters and at least 10 major humanitarian organizations use them (Berger 2013). Examples of kit use include the distribution of 4,500 household hygiene kits by the ICRC during Typhoon Hagupit (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies 2015), of hygiene kits as well as agricultural kits, shelter kits and chlorine

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